CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Learning Development Office
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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UNIVERSITY RESOURCES IN SUPPORT OF TEACHING
LEARNING DEVELOPMENT OFFICE
AND
LACOLLE CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION

LEARNING DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

The Learning Development Office was created by the university in 1973 as a response to faculty and student interest in maintaining and improving the quality of teaching and learning. Our specific goals include offering services and support in the design, development and evaluation of courses; serving as a university resource centre, providing literature and workshops, individual and group consultation to the Concordia community, and encouraging and supporting the development of educational research in areas of specific interest to Concordia.

SERVICES

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATION

The Teaching Development Service is our major resource in terms of individual consultation. It was created at the University of Massachussetts and has been adapted by us to meet the needs of Concordia faculty. The service includes comprehensive data collection on individual strengths and weaknesses in teaching and provides the opportunity to work over a term or two with a trained specialist on specific improvement strategies. This is a very individualized and strictly confidential service. We are also available for other individual work on course improvement such as information collection, questionnaire construction, in-class observations or course design.

DEPARTMENTAL CONSULTATION

We are prepared to consult with departments in any area that relates to the improvement of university teaching. These areas might include: course evaluation, teaching and administrative effectiveness, curriculum development, and course design.

EVALUATION

We view evaluation as one of the major elements in instructional improvement and offer encouragement and assistance to individuals and departments in the design and development of better measures of educational performance. This includes the evaluation of courses, teaching, and student learning.

TEACHING DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

These grants are designed to assist faculty, either individually or in groups, to develop and implement improvements in their courses, to improve or acquire specific teaching skills. Contigent upon the availiability of funds, applications for grants will be solicited during October or November.

RESOURCES

BOOK ARTICLES

Over the last nine years we have built up a small library of books, articles, and video tapes on issues related to teaching and learning. We invite faculty to come and browse through our resources and borrow any that seem appropriate.

We also have available nine self-instructional modules on various topics related to teaching and learning. The modules can be completed in any order and each one involves you in directly applying the module's activities to your own teaching situations.

NEWSLETTERS

Our newsletter 'Teaching and Learning' is published regularly during the academic year. Its purpose is to provide faculty with information on educational experiments and innovation in higher education as well as to be a forum for discussion of particular aspects of teaching and learning, eg: grade inflation, student evaluation of professors. Newsletters are automatically sent to all Concordia faculty members. If you do not receive the newsletter and would like to, or if you would like to contribute an article, please contact us.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

In addition to our regular on-going work in evaluation, consulting with faculty, the newsletter and teaching development grants, each year we undertake a number of special projects. These projects arise out of particualr needs that we identify or in response to specific requests. These are often conducted in

collaboration with other university departments.

As an example, the following are projects which we conducted last year: -

JOINT RESEARCH PROJECT

Over the last two years we have been involved in a joint project with 4 faculty members, P. Abrami, C. Petersen, M. Taylor, and D. McDonald, looking at various aspects of teaching and learning at Concordia. We investigated student's perceptions of failure experiences, teaching and learning styles, professor's views of teaching, and learning from the learner's viewpoint. We wish to thank the 25-30 professors who colunteered their own time, as well as some of their class time, and also the many students who participated. Some of the results of this project will be reported in a series of newsletters on adults in university.

LARGE CLASSES

As a result of expressed interest from faculty in Commerce, we undertook a project to examine teaching and learning in large classes. We collected data from students and professors, as well as reviewed some of the research and innovation literature on large classes. The major outcome of this work has been a series of newsletters on large classes published this past year.

TEACHING SKILLS PROJECT

Utilizing the enormous bank of student evaluation data that we have built up over the last few years, we have been able to identify teachers who have been rated by their students as outstanding (in the top 10%) on particular teaching skills. Last year we began interviewing these professors to determine what they think they do that might contribute to their success in these areas. We plan to continue this project next year and to make this 'advice' available to other faculty members.

If you have any suggestions for projects or feel we can be of assistance in some way - please call Ron Smith at 482-0320 local 695 or Jane Magnan local 397.

LACOLLE CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION

The Lacolle Centre for Educational Innovation is an off-campus residential facility located forty miles south of Montreal near Lacolle, Quebec.

The hundred and fifty year old yellow farmhouse occupies twenty acres of lawn and natural woodlot about four miles southwest of Lacolle village.

It accomodates twenty-four people comfortably in four bedrooms furnished with bunk-beds, dressers and closets. There are also two small-group meeting rooms on the first floor, and an upstairs lounge.

The 'stone room', which is designed as a large-group meeting area, is carpeted and furnished with comfortable chairs, a blackboard, large work tables and a fireplace.

The kitchen and adjoining dining room are fully equipped, and there are three bathrooms with showers, as well as a heated back room with running water, useable year-round as a laboratory or workshop.

Lacolle was established by the Loyola campus of Concordia University in 1971, with the stated purpose of extending the university experience by replacing some of the usual restrictions of a classroom setting with an informal, shared community.

This environment is designed to promote the development and understanding of relationships among people, as well as to provide an opportunity to explore new and creative approaches to learning.

The primary goal of the Centre is to ensure that its users will, by working collaboratively at Lacolle, discover ways to enhance their educational pursuits on the university campus.

The Centre has four specific objectives:

Educational: To be used as a resource for developing and testing innovations in higher education which may enrich the quality of teaching and learning on the university campus.

Individual: To provide an environment in which individuals can define and develop their personal resources in order to enhance their learning.

Group: To emphasize the importance of the personal component of learning and to encourage its development through interaction in an informal setting.

Community and Organization: To provide a vehicle through which organizational and classroom groups may improve their ability to function effectively both on their own and as part of the total university community.

The Lacolle staff is available to help design programs, plan organizational details and to provide

professional skills when needed. Later this term we intend to publish a newsletter which will describe how the Centres' resources have been used to further academic goals. If you would like further information on how to use the center feel free to phone Jane Magnan 482-0320 local 494, or Noreen Linton at local 344.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

THE LACOLLE FESTIVAL

Saturday October 9th. This is a day to enjoy in the country and an opportunity to see the facility. A day of games, feasting and square dancing. Families welcome. Cost is $6.00 per adult, $3.00 per child. Transportation can be provided.

AWARENESS THROUGH GESTALT

October 16th & 17th, with world renowned therapist - Marty Fromm. Cost is $100.00. Taking place at the Loyola Faculty Club.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST
POD Conference
Chateau Montebello
October 14th - 17th 1982

THEME: Personal & Institutional Development in Academic Crisis

SPONSORED BY: Professional & Organizational Development Network in Higher Education.

This is a non profit professional association dedicated to improving higher education.

Seminars and workshops will include such topics as: getting students involved in the classroom; boredom and the quality of instruction; career patterns and alternatives; an introduction to computer literacy; evaluating faculty research and publications. Among the 'presenters' attending will be John Daniel, Concordia, Robert Diamond, Syracuse, William Berquist, California, Jack Lindquist, Goddard and David Halliburton, Stanford.

REGISTRATION

COST: $105.00 (members)
$130.00 (non-members)

Room & Board: $67.00 per night.

You may get further information or register through the Learning Development Office.